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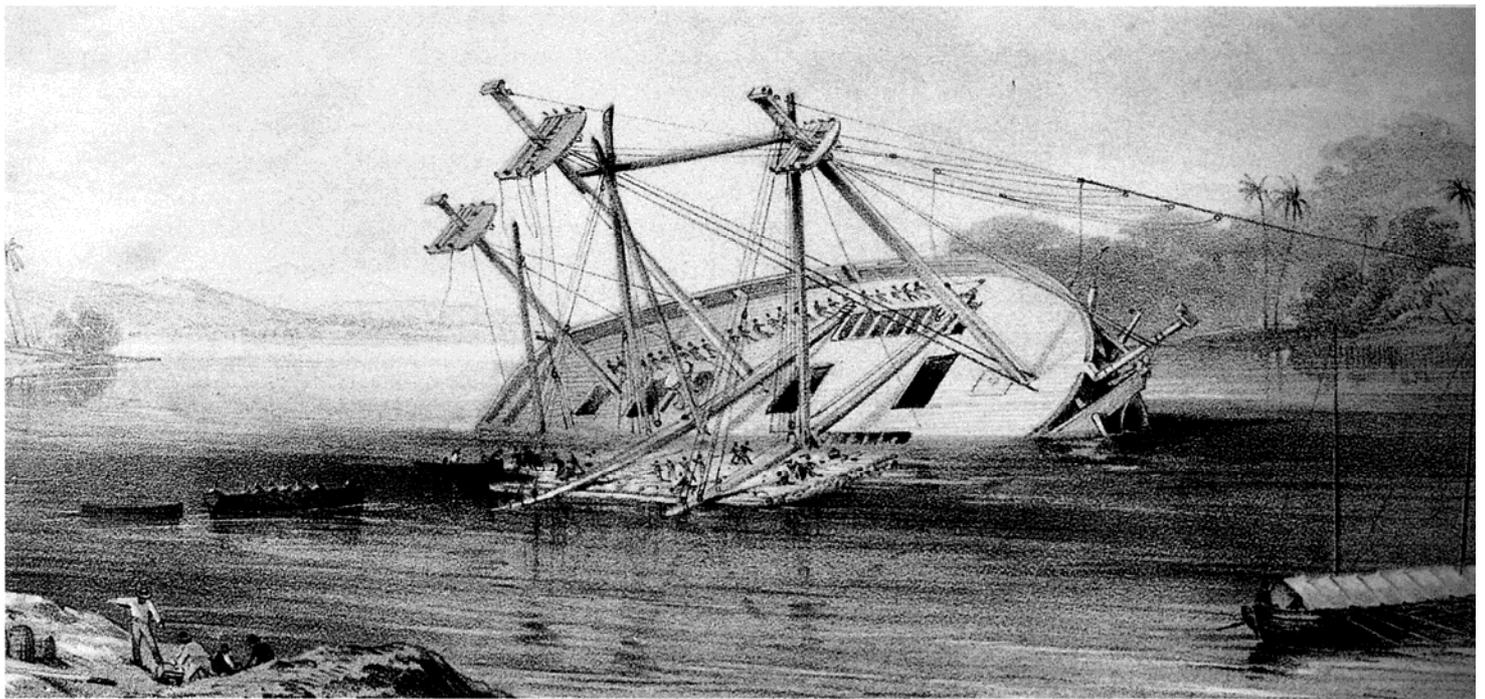
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*Take a close look at this lithograph. What is happening here?
See story page 11*





The Maritime Heritage Association Journal is the official newsletter of the Maritime Heritage Association of Western Australia, Incorporated.

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EDITORIAL

Members of this association are well aware of the phenomenal amount of research carried out by the past-president, Rod Dickson, and his willingness to share his results with others. Some time ago Rod gave me a 3.5" floppy disk on which he had recorded notes on the whereabouts, within the National Australian Archives in East Victoria Park and the State Records Office, information on maritime matters can be found. This information includes ship's logs, crew lists, certificates of registry, certificates of builders, Articles of Agreements, and many other sources of useful information. Rod stated that I could publish the information in our journal for the benefit of readers. For those doing any research into maritime matters in this state then this disk is an invaluable aid. If any member would like a copy please contact me and I will send them a copy of the disk or the same information on a CD.

I returned from a trip to Asia at the end of October. An interesting sight were the woven bamboo boats of northern Vietnam. These small boats are given a coating of tar to make them waterproof.



The members profile commencing in this volume of the journal is that of Vice-President Nick Burningham. It promises to be fascinating.



A Merry Christmas
and
A Happy New Year
To All Members & Friends



SINGA BETINA



A traditional bedor

IN A VACANT LOT, in the onion-growing region of southern Beaconsfield, a vessel with a remarkable history is undergoing a major rebuild.

SINGA BETINA (“Lioness”) was built on Pulau Duyong (Dugong Island) in the estuary of the Trengganu River, at Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia, in the mid-1960s. She was built as a traditional *perahu bedor* – a double-ender with a two-masted junk-rig. *Perahu bedor*, and similar counter-sterned *perahu tenpinis*, carried cargo on the South China Sea, especially salt from the salt-flats of southern Thailand, but SINGA BETINA was built as a yacht for a French couple, Henri and Jose Bourdens.

The Bourdens’ project was a romantic dream which became the terrible nightmare that Henri recorded in his book “Cruise to a Cruel Shore”. He was, by his own admission, not a practical or skilled mariner. After a few near-disasters sailing around the Malay coast, the Bourdens set out for the Philippines, but with the rig falling apart and never competently repaired they were driven southeast through Indonesia, across the Arafura Sea and wrecked on the north of Bathurst Island, north of Darwin, NT.

They slowly starved waiting for rescue on a remote beach, tormented by sandflies and mosquitoes. Attempts to walk to the mission station at Apsley Strait and the lighthouse at Cape Fourcroy were thwarted by impassable mangrove swamps where they were lucky not to have met crocodiles. Eventually they built an inadequate raft and were drifting away on the Timor Sea, being eaten alive by small crabs, when they were found and rescued by a lugger.

SINGA BETINA lay wrecked, decks and superstructure gone and the hull filled with sand, but her hull was little damaged. She was salvaged by people from Apsley Strait and worked for some years as a motor boat carrying cargo and later barramundi fishing out of Darwin. When I first saw her in early 1977 she was owned by Ted Whittaker, who was repairing the damage she’d suffered in Cyclone Tracey.

I’d arrived in Darwin on a boat built in Sarawak, East Malaysia; sailing with erstwhile MHA member Jamie Munro (as recorded in *MHA Journal* 7:2) and during the next few years we were among a small group of people who brought a number of traditional Southeast Asian sailing vessels to Australia. We influenced Ted to restore SINGA BETINA as a sailing vessel. In 1979, Jerry Williams had sailed BURONGBAHRI (“Seabird”), a small *perahu bedor*, from Kuala Terengganu. BURONG BAHRI was junk-rigged, but with a single mast to make her more easily handled by a small

crew. Ted gave SINGA BETINA a similar rig.

Unfortunately Ted never took part in the Darwin races or regattas for traditional sailing craft, but I had the impression that SINGA BETINA was sailing faster than my HATISENANG (“Contented heart”) when we were sailing close hauled on parallel courses one Sunday afternoon, and HATISENANG won more than one race.

Ted and his partner Judy sailed SINGA BETINA up through Indonesia to Singapore and Malaysia, including a return to Kuala Terengganu in the early 80s. Then they sailed back to north Australia where they worked carrying drums of fuel and kava (the powder for making a mildly intoxicating drink) to the remote Aboriginal settlements around the north coast. Improving services by barges and control of kava supply displaced them after a year or three and SINGA BETINA was sold to a character known as Tattooed Tony. He lived on board and made some modifications to the simple accommodation, but he never sailed anywhere and didn’t keep up with the maintenance. After a few years SINGA BETINA was craned out to join the collection of boats used as caravans at Dinah Beach – a white-elephants’ graveyard rather like Maylands slip. Ill-health caused Tony to remove to an apartment and SINGA BETINA continued to deteriorate until four or five years ago when she was sold for a small sum to a mysterious character named Jamie Robertson. Robertson had appeared in Darwin some years previous, and had brought a motor-sailer *perahu* from Indonesia which he later sold and delivered to an NGO under the UN authorities in newly Independent East Timor. His origins are sometimes said to be obscure, but his physical appearance and history are identical to those of Jamie Munro mentioned above. As readers of *MHA Journal* 7:2 with good memory will recall, Mr Munro had borrowed a Kuala Terengganu built *perahu tenpinis* and sailed her through South-east Asia and to Darwin for some years.

Restoration of SINGA BETINA went slowly in the tropical heat of Darwin, so a couple of years ago Jamie trucked her to his native Perth. Since then he has spent a lot of time laboriously removing old fastenings. He has replaced some planks, but most of SINGA BETINA’s planking is in remarkably good condition. It is a timber known as *chengal* in Trengganu. A number of similar timbers are known as *chengal* in different parts of Malaysia. Trengganu *chengal* is probably *Neobalenocarpus heimii*, but it might be the more widely used *Hopea odorata*.

Jamie hopes to have SINGA BETINA back in the water in 2007.



The Ditty Bag

An occasional collection of nautical trivia to inform, astound, amuse and inspire.

(The inspiration could take the form of contributions to this page!)



Syzygy. An astronomical term denoting that two celestial bodies are in opposition or conjunction. Thus the Sun and the Moon are in syzygy at Springs.

The great influenza pandemic of 1918-19 had many ramifications. In the *Daily News* of 10 June 1919 one of the main items of news was that the Perth metropolitan area had been quarantined due to the influenza epidemic. Thirteen Special Constables had been sworn in to help Police prevent people from leaving or entering the metropolitan area unless they were in possession of a certificate.

The largest warship ever built is the Nimitz-class nuclear powered aircraft carrier USS *Ronald Reagan*. Of 103,600 tonnes she is 332.9 metres long, with a beam of 40.8 metres and a flight deck width of 76.8 metres. Launched in March 2001 the vessel was commissioned 28 months later. Power is from two Westinghouse nuclear reactors which, through four turbines, drive four five-bladed propellers.

The day after the *America* won the Hundred Guineas Cup in 1851 Queen Victoria and Prince Albert visited the yacht, which had sailed to Osborne House at her request. During the tour of the yacht the *America's* skipper, New York pilot Dick Brown, reminded Prince Albert to wipe his feet before going below. The astonished Prince stood still at the top of the companionway as Brown said, "I know who you are, but you'll have to wipe your feet."

On 1 June 1919 at Fremantle five sailors from HMAS *Australia* were charged with mutiny. They all pleaded guilty and were given sentences ranging from one to two years and dishonorably discharge. So great was the public outcry against this that the sailors were released within six months.

In Fremantle in 1870 of the 735 males who were working, the following were employed in one or other of the maritime trades:

Seamen	142
Whalers & fishermen	12
Boatmen	37
Shipwrights & boat-builders	7

The word *gallant* as used in describing sails (i.e. the top-gallant sail) comes from the word garland. A garland in ancient days was a rope used in hoisting the topmasts. Hence, when a mast was added to ships above the topmasts, it was called a garland mast.

From World Ship Society, Burnie Branch Newsletter, April 2006:

Piracy is rife off the Somali coast. Attacks are taking place as far as 390 miles offshore. There have been 23 attacks in 6 months with pirates using a mother ship to extend their range seaward. Marine News says at the time of publishing in January seven ships and their crews are being held for ransom in Somalia.

The following were the lengths of the mile (in yards) in various countries in the mid-19th C:

England	1760
England (nautical)	2025
Russia	1100
Ireland & Scotland	2200
Italy	1467
Poland	4400
Spain	5028
Germany	5865
Sweden & Denmark	7233
Hungary	8800
France (a league)	3666

The Perth suburb of Baldivis is named after the three ships that brought the Group Settlers to that area in 1922-24; the *Balranald* (13,039 tons), the *Diogenes* (12,341 tons) and the *Jervis Bay* (13,839 tons).



Ships of the State Shipping Service

The ninth in the series by World Ship Society member Jeff Thompson

No.9 *Koolama* Official Number: 140184

A new, large multi purpose vessel was required for service to the North West to replace the ageing *Kangaroo*, and an order was placed with Harland and Wolff in 1936 for such a vessel, to be named *Koolama*. The ship was launched on 16 December 1937 at the Glasgow yard of Harland & Wolff: She was 4,068 gross registered tons, 2,200 deadweight tons, 110.3 metres overall, 16.4 metres breadth, with two Harland B & W 6 cylinder diesel engines of 3,500bhp and two screws, and having accommodation for 148 first class and 12 second passengers. Also fitted out for the transporting of 500 head of cattle.

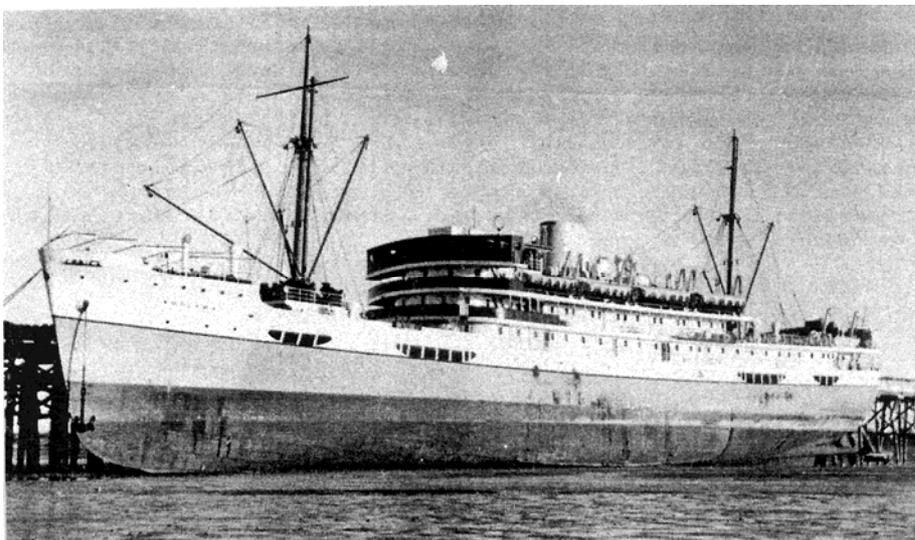
On completion, the *Koolama* left U.K. on 3 April 1938 for Fremantle via Cape Town. She was a notable vessel of her time and being well appointed soon became popular with passengers.

On the 16 January 1942, whilst at Darwin she was requisitioned for war duty, loading 289 troops and stores and sailing to Kupang, Timor the next day. She arrived back in Darwin with evacuees on 24 January 1942 after calling at Ambon. Sailing for Fremantle the next day.

On the 20 February 1942, on the next northern voyage the *Koolama* was attacked by Japanese aircraft off Cape Rulhieres. It was decided to beach the vessel after receiving direct hits, with the crew and passengers abandoning ship to set up a shore camp. A further attack on the next

day did not cause any additional damage. With the high tide on 1 March 1942 the ship was refloated and then sailed for Wyndham with a skeleton crew. The remaining shore party was left with ample provisions and six lifeboats but most had already departed for the Drysdale River Mission. The *Koolama* berthed at the Wyndham jetty on 2 March with pumping and cargo discharge commencing. An air raid over the town on 3 March caused the ship to be abandoned. Crew later returned to find the vessel well down astern and in a short time it slowly rolled over to starboard and sank, pulling the Wyndham jetty about 600 millimetres out of line.

Salvage attempts were made as the jetty was now virtually unusable to other ships. Salvage inspections and reports as to who was going to pay continued for the duration of the war. During 1945-46 salvage equipment and personnel were gathered with the actual salvage work commencing on 15 April 1946. The work was frustrated by various incidences and by late August 1946 only a small movement of the vessel away from the jetty had been achieved. It was becoming clear that further salvage attempts were unlikely as a successful salvage was now in doubt and other ideas were being mooted. The whole operation then drifted apart and become abandoned. The hull eventually was covered in mud and being approximately 90 degrees to the jetty and away from it, where it remains today, presented no navigational problem. Not a fitting ending to such a noble ship.



Koolama at the old Broome jetty, 1939. Navarro collection



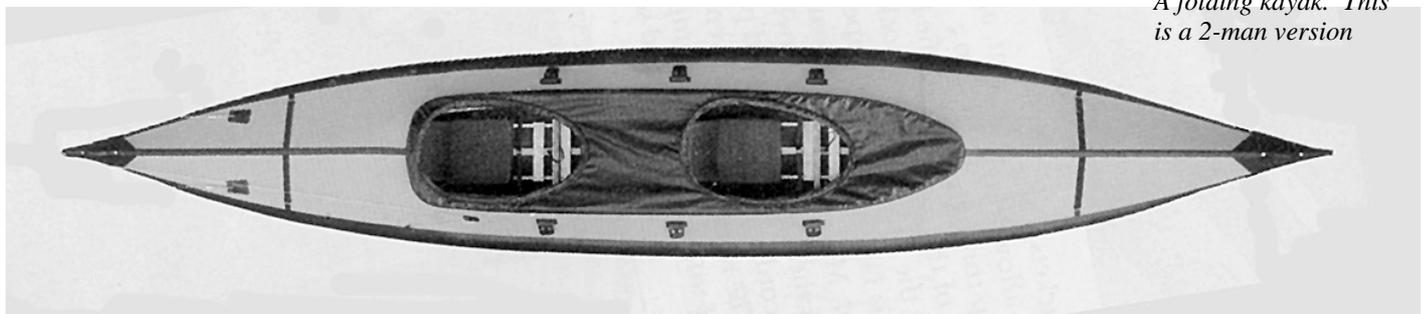
Can You Help?

I recently read a book about the sailing ventures of Arthur George Holdsworth Macpherson (1873-1942) during the period 1930 to 1939. Macpherson took up sailing at the age of 57, and sailed the 40-foot cutter *Driac* in 1930-31 from England to Malta via North Africa, calling at many ports. However the yacht had, in his opinion, some faults so that he had built for him a smaller cutter, *Driac II*, which had been specially designed to his specifications for long distance, short handed sailing. In this 32-foot yacht he sailed to the Azores and return as a shake-down cruise. He then sailed to Iceland, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean, through the Suez Canal to Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and via Thailand, Singapore and Borneo to Indonesia through many of that country's most remote islands. From there to Darwin, then across the Indian Ocean by way of Christmas Island, Cocos Keeling, Rodriguez, Mauritius and Reunion to Lourenco Marques on the eastern coast of Africa. His voyages were noted for the myriad of small ports that he visited. While at Kupang, the port on the south-west tip of the island of Timor, he met Oskar Speck. Speck, a German, had reached Kupang from Germany via (among other places)

the Danube, Greek islands, Euphrates River, Persian Gulf, India, Burma and Java in a *Faltboot*, i.e. a folding kayak made from a wooden frame covered in rubberised canvas. He was obliged to go ashore when he needed sleep, and lived on sweetened condensed milk, cheese and milk chocolate. His objective was Australia, and when Macpherson met him on 6 June 1939 in Kupang he was about to leave for Australia via New Guinea. Has anyone heard of this man Speck and his voyage? Did he finally reach Australia? World War II would have commenced about the time he may have arrived; did the story of his phenomenal journey get lost in the world shattering news that erupted at the beginning of September 1939?

Note: Folding canoes were used during World War II by both Z-force in their attack on Singapore (Major Ivan Lyon, Operation Jaywick), and Lieutenant Colonel H.G. "Blondie" Hasler's "Cockleshell Heroes" in their attack on shipping in Bordeaux, France.

Reference:
Hughes, J.S., (Editor), 1944, *Macpherson's Voyages*. Methuen & Co. Ltd., London.



A folding kayak. This is a 2-man version

Marine Glue

The following recipe for "marine" glue comes from an old book entitled *The Handyman's 1,000 Practical Recipes* first published in 1913 by Cassell & Co. Ltd., London; my edition is dated January 1917.

Take 1 part of indiarubber (cut into shreds) and 12 parts of coal-tar naphtha; these are kept in a bottle in a warm place and shaken from time to time till the rubber is dissolved; then 20 parts of powdered shellac are added, and shaking is continued until the mass becomes pasty. It is then poured on to a cold surface, allowed to solidify, and then broken up into small pieces, which should be melted and applied as thinly as possible while still warm. Great care must be taken in making this cement, as the naphtha

is very inflammable.

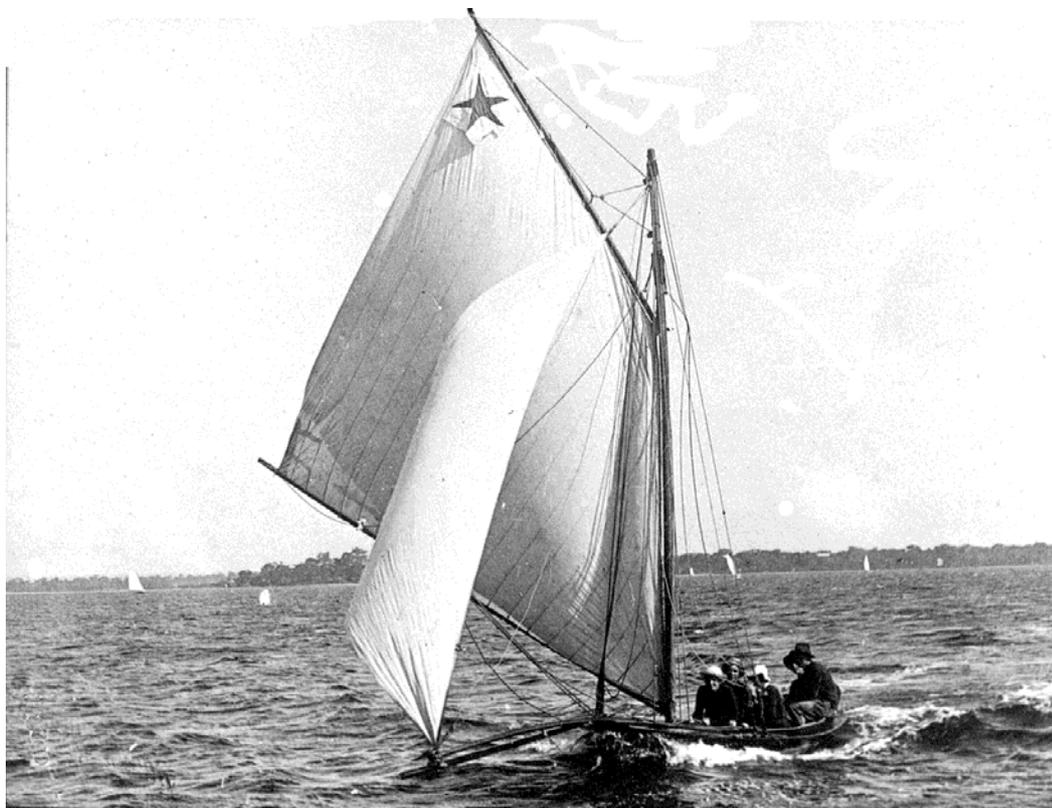
The recipe for fireproof black paint for boiler funnels is also of interest.

Get 3½ lb of lampblack, 2 lb of blacklead, and 1 lb of black oxide of manganese. Powder the blacklead and mix well together, and pass through a fine sieve. Now mix to the consistency of paint with ½ gal of gold size, ½ pint of turpentine, and a small quantity of terebene. The above blacks may also be mixed with 5 parts of silicate of soda and 2 parts of water. Apply as ordinary paint, giving the chimneys two coats.

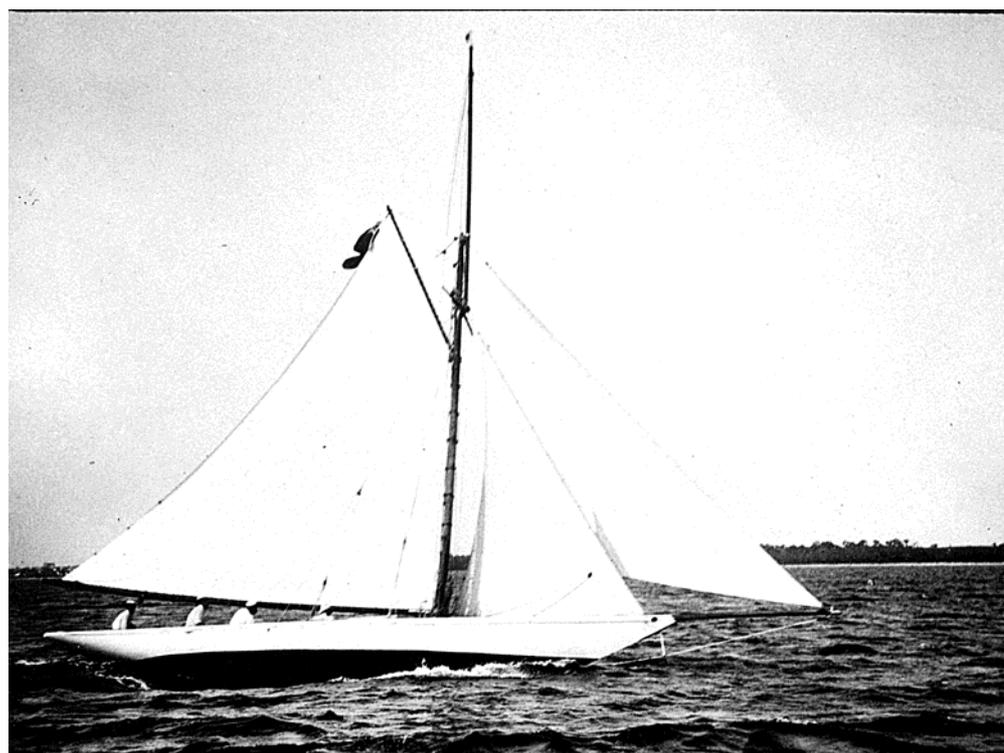


Early Swan River Yachts

Two more yachts from about 1906.



Etta



Genesta



A Good Towing Feat

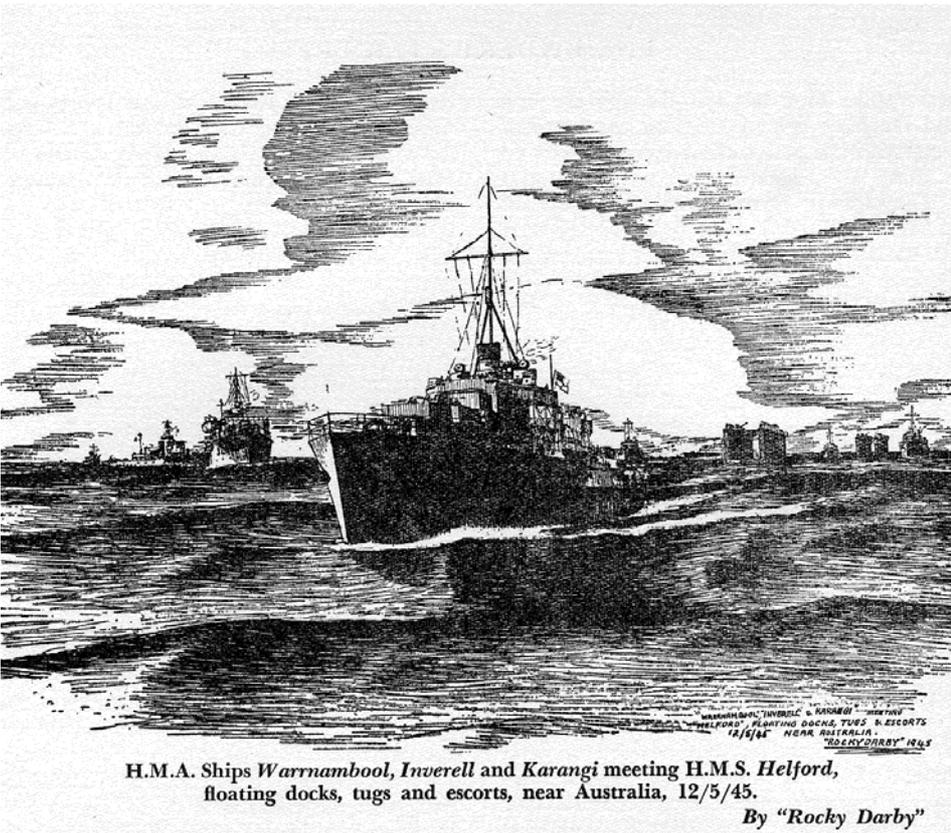
The following story is from *H.M.A.S. Mk. IV*, published by The Australian War Memorial in 1945. The author is given as "Rocky Darby".

There was a sigh of relief in the Naval Staff Office, Darwin, when A.F.D.18, and her escorting vessels and tugs, were safely anchored. For the rattle of cables through hawse pipes on this occasion marked the completion in Australia of long and eventful tows which had commenced, in the first place, at Greenock, Scotland, when A.F.D.20 - a sister dock to A.F.D.18 - had departed from that port in December 1944, in tow of H.M.R. tugs *Destiny* and *Eminent*.

Earlier in the war A.F.D.20, being identical with an enemy floating dock then located in Norwegian waters, was used by midget submarines of the Royal Navy as a practice target, it being in-

31st December, 1944, when the vessels departed from Greenock for Gibraltar. New Year's Day was passed in fine weather, but shortly afterwards the weather deteriorated, causing *Destiny* and *Eminent*, together with A.F.D.20, to pitch and roll so heavily that *Eminent's* steering gear carried away. Although her engineers repaired the damage with the aid of the galley fire, *Eminent* was relieved by another tug so that she could put in to an adjacent port for repairs. Rough weather continued until Gibraltar was reached on the 12th January, 1945.

Following the completion of various repairs, *Destiny* and A.F.D.20 departed from Gibraltar on the next stage of the voyage, leaving *Eminent* to follow. *Eminent* overtook the tow at a most opportune moment when *Destiny* was in trouble. *Eminent* took over the tow, and *Destiny* proceeded to Oran for repairs.



H.M.A. Ships *Warrnambool*, *Inverell* and *Karangi* meeting H.M.S. *Helford*, floating docks, tugs and escorts, near Australia, 12/5/45.

By "Rocky Darby"

tended later to carry out a midget-submarine operation against the enemy dock. In addition to acting as a practice target, A.F.D.20 also docked the midget submarines before they proceeded on their successful mission against her German opposite number.

H.M.R. tugs *Destiny* and *Eminent*, with A.F.D.20 in tow, commenced the long tow to Darwin on the

Eminent and A.F.D.20 proceeded to Bizerta where they were joined by *Destiny*, and sailed for Malta, reaching there on the 27th January and leaving again five days later for Port Said. Good weather was experienced on passage, and port was reached on the 7th February. Six days later Suez was left astern and a good-weather passage was made down the Red Sea until, two days before reaching Aden, a considerable swell was experienced. Arriving on the 21st February, tugs and tow departed from Aden on the 25th of the month and reached Cochin at daylight on the 10th March. Here their numbers were swelled by A.F.D.18 and her tugs, and escort vessels for the passage to Australia.

The whole convoy departed from Cochin but was soon reduced in numbers. Shortly after leaving port *Eminent* caught fire in her engine-room, and



although the fire was extinguished by her crew she had to proceed to Colombo, towed by H.M.R. tug *Cheerly*. To add to the troubles *Destiny* had a fire, but got it out successfully. Some days later A.F.D.20 broke adrift from *Destiny* in the early hours of the morning, and it was five hours before the tow was secured again. *Cheerly*, however, rejoining the convoy, eased the situation for the other tugs. Water and fuel supplies being low by this time, the tanker *Eagles Dale* rendezvoused and supplied the vessels with those necessities.

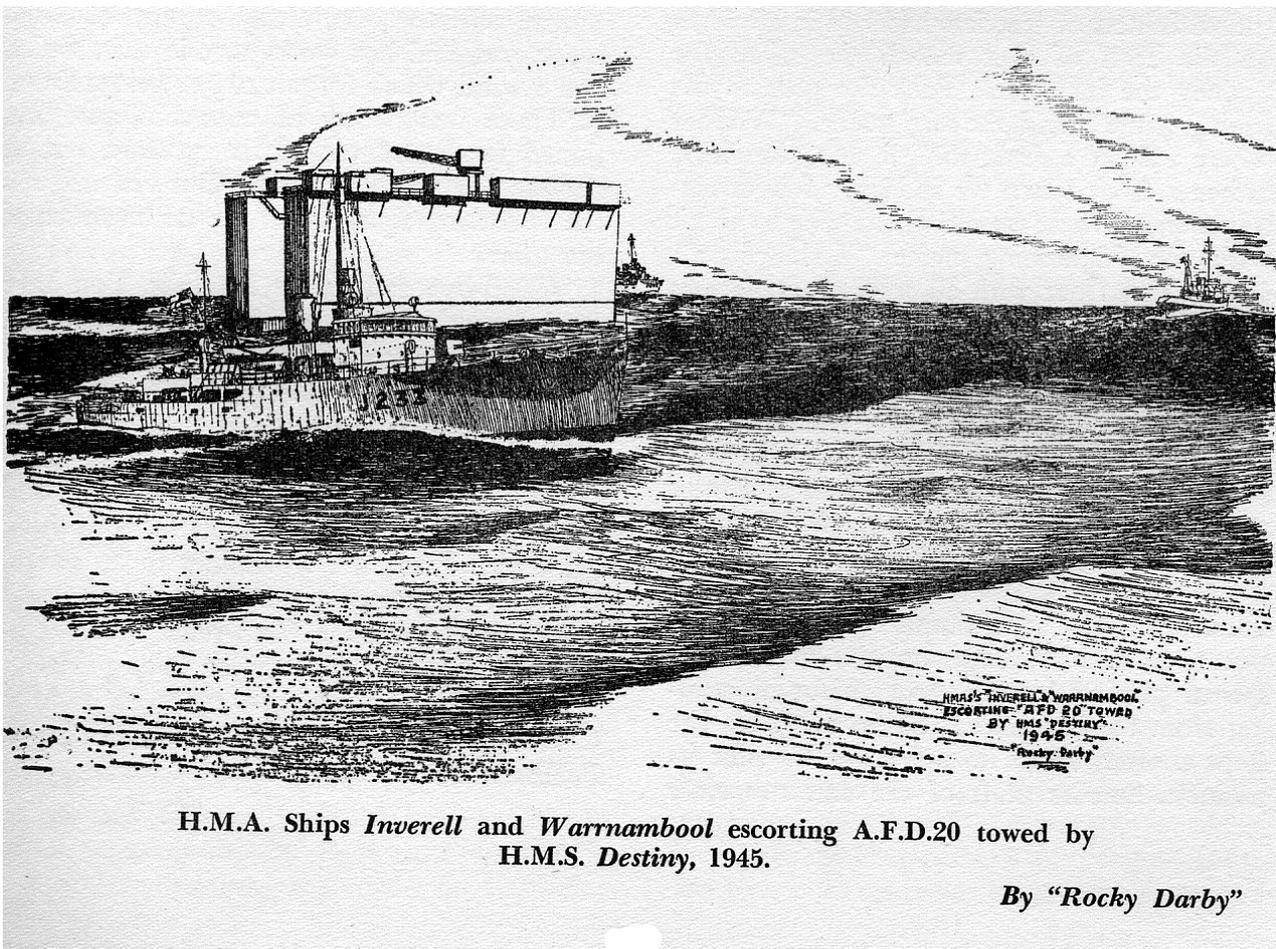
Heavy weather was again encountered, and seas commenced breaking over the docks to such an extent that their boats were in danger of damage. Good seamanship, however, and an ingenious idea of raising and forming a breakwater around them, saved the boats from harm.

By this time the convoy was near Australia, and H.M.A.S. *Warrnambool* and H.M.A.S. *Inverell* having joined, these ships were ordered to escort A.F.D.20, towed by *Destiny*, and proceed independently towards Darwin, which was reached on the 22nd May. *Destiny* and A.F.D.20 had by this time completed a voyage of 11,313 miles,

with a steaming time of 2036 hours at an average speed of 5.56 knots.

In the meantime H.M.A.S. *Karangi* had joined A.F.D.18 and company and provided them with stores and fresh provisions. A.F.D.18 with her attendant vessels arrived in Darwin on the 24th May and remained there until towed by H.M.A.S. *Heros* and *Salvestor* to Thursday Island for onward passage to her destination. The escorting vessels for this part of the voyage were H.M.A. ships *Goulburn* and *Tamworth*. A.F.D.20, towed by her constant companion *Destiny*, assisted by H.M.A.S. *Sprightly*, also departed from Darwin to continue her voyage to her destination. Other vessels which were in this convoy from Britain and India to Australia were H.M.S. *Helford*, H.M.S. *Plym*, H.M.S. *Odzani*, H.M.S. *Usk*, H.M.S. *Barle*, H.M.S. *Advantage* and H.M.S. *Empire Sam*.

Editor's Note: Is the HMS *Plym* mentioned above the HMS *Plym* in which an atom bomb was detonated at the Monte Bello Islands in the tests of the late 1950s? Most of the vessel vapourized, but I have seen a few scraps from it on Trimouille Island.



H.M.A. Ships *Inverell* and *Warrnambool* escorting A.F.D.20 towed by H.M.S. *Destiny*, 1945.

By "Rocky Darby"



Do You Know The Date?

This photograph was taken in Geraldton and is of the Thos. & Jas. Harrison ship *Wayfarer*. Built in Glasgow in 1925 she was 8,030 deadweight tons, 395.5' length and had a 464 NHP triple expansion steam engine. In Bombay on 14 April 1944 *Wayfarer* survived the explosion of the *Fort Stikine* loaded with 1,300 tons of TNT. This explosion destroyed 19 merchant ships and 3 warships. *Wayfarer* was torpedoed on 19 August 1944 150 miles east of Mozambique, only 10 of the 61 crew survived. Can anyone date this photograph?

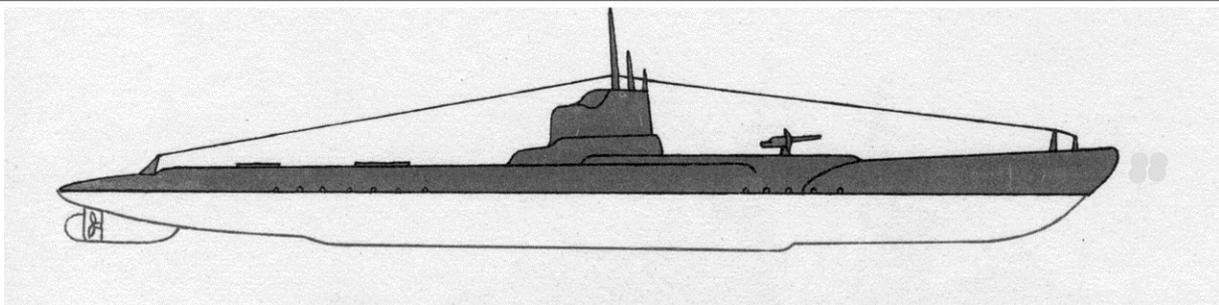


Things They Would Rather Have Not Said

Underwater weapons? I call them underhand, unfair and un-English. They'll never be any use in war and I'll tell you why – I'm going to get the First Lord to announce that we intend to treat all submarines as pirate vessels in wartime. We'll hang their crews.

The Comptroller of the Admiralty, 1914

(The British Admiralty still held to the antiquated notion that war was a kind of international sport in which the Germans should “play by the rules” – British rules – and send their battle fleet into the North Sea to fight and be destroyed by the British battle fleet in a Trafalgar-like battle)





HMS Bramble & Her Cockroaches

The survey vessel HMS *Bramble* (a cutter of 161 tons, length 71 ft, beam 23.5 ft, and ten 6-pound cannons) under the command of Lieutenant Charles Yule became, like so many other vessels of that era, infested with cockroaches. In December 1845 Yule tried to smoke them out to rid the vessel of the pests. The following is an account of the attempt by John Sweatman, Clerk of Provisions:

The fires were lighted, sulphur thrown on, and the hatches battened down, but when they were opened again [two days later] we found to our chagrin that the smoking had no effect beyond slightly stupefying the cockroaches, which were congregated about the lower deck in regular masses. Mr Yule accordingly resolved to try another plan...he got the commissariat fire-engine on board and thoroughly washed out every hole & corner, lower deck, hold and every place where a hose could be led. Millions were destroyed this way...but it was impossible to extirpate them entirely as many of them took refuge in the bulwarks...

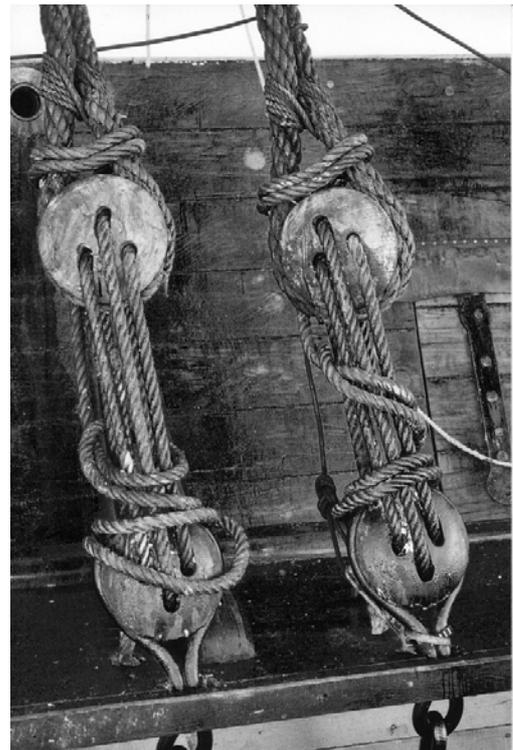
Five months later the cockroaches were as bad as ever, so Yule decided on a drastic step. He was at Port Essington and, after taking everything out of the ship, a hole was made in the side of the hull to let her sink. This occurred, and at high water the vessel was completely covered by the sea, even the bulwarks where the cockroaches had sheltered previously. The cockroaches poured out in their millions, according to Sweatman, and by nightfall the vessel was completely clear. She was raised and declared cockroach free.

However they returned, and by early 1849 when in Sydney they were again in plague numbers so Yule decided to sink his vessel again. On 5 February 1849, after clearing everything removable from the vessel, *Bramble* was again deliberately sunk, this time at Mosman Bay. This time she

was left underwater for a week, and then raised by a team of 50 men, once again (hopefully) cockroach free.

Sinking your ship seems a fairly drastic measure to take to rid a vessel of pests and I wondered how often this action might have been taken. Was this an isolated act? I then came across a reproduction of a tinted lithograph engraved by G. Hawkins in 1848 in Richard Woodman's *The Victory of Seapower: Winning the Napoleonic War 1806-1814* (Chatham Publishing, London, 1998) which, according to the author's caption, shows a vessel being hove down for careening. The title of the engraving is "Immersion of HMS Samarang in the Sarawak." What makes this interesting is that firstly the title states *immersion* and not careening, and secondly that the engraving clearly shows that some of the deck planking on each side near the point of greatest beam has been removed. As shown, when the vessel is hove down the water floods in and the vessel is obviously sinking, or at least has sunk below her normal hove-down position. Is this ship also carrying out pest control far from home in what perhaps was a relatively common manner?

Peter Worsley





Shades of the *Zeewijk*

As everyone knows, the survivors of the wreck of the VOC ship *Zeewijk* on Half Moon Reef in 1727 built a small vessel, *Sloepie*, which they then sailed from the Abrolhos Islands to Batavia.

In 1883 a somewhat similar incident occurred with the American sailing ship *Ranier*. She sailed from Philadelphia on 9 August 1883 for Japan with a cargo of 73,000 cases of kerosene. Heading south-east she passed the Cape of Good Hope on 19 October, and then south of Australia before heading north. The *Ranier* passed Norfolk Island and then east of New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. As they reached the Marshall Islands Captain Samuel H. Morrison states:

On 1 January 1884 took the trades near Margaretta Island, passing eight miles to the westward and steering north-west expecting to make Lydia Island before dark. Could not see it from the foreroyal yard which proved that the position laid down on my chart was incorrect. For caution steered southwest until 9.30 pm when the ship ran on the weather side of a half tide reef [this proved to be Ujae Atoll]. The weather being dark and hazy, this could not be seen in time for the ship to answer her helm.

Soon after the *Ranier* struck, a number of squalls came and the rising wind and seas pounded the ship, her bilge was holed and she heeled over onto her beam ends. About noon the following day the natives from Ujae Island, some 10 miles across the atoll from the wreck, rescued the crew and took them to their island. Shortly after the decks burst open, the cargo washed out over the reef to the sea, and the masts fell.

By 10 January the men had fitted out the longboat and it was sent, under the command of the second mate with four seamen, to search for help. The remaining crew commenced building a 40-foot schooner from the wreckage of the *Ranier*. This construction was finished on 18 March and leaving the remainder of the crew with the islanders, the captain and 13 men sailed their newly built vessel for five days in rough weather south-east to

Jaluit (also called Bonham) Island. Here they came across two German trading houses. The Germans, however, were not as helpful as the natives of Ujae had been. Captain Morrison was obliged to give them his chronometer, the schooner he had sailed in to find help, and borrow money at 5% per month to enable the crew to live. The Germans would not send one of their schooners to Ujae to rescue the men left there.

On 21 January 1884 the men in the longboat were picked up by the British barque *Calabria* and taken to Saigon. From there they went by steamer to Hong Kong where the US Consul arranged for the US sloop of war *Essex* to rescue the rest of the crew. On 3 April the men on Ujae Island were picked up by the *Essex* which then went to Jaluit to collect the captain and his men. After arriving at the charted position of Ujae the *Essex* spent fourteen hours hunting for the island. The position of Ujae atoll was still in doubt 80 years later as the Pacific Islands Pilot Vol II states: *It was reported in 1950 that it was difficult to distinguish the entrance, and, in 1964, that the atoll was incorrectly charted.*

This was the *Ranier*'s maiden voyage. She was built by E. & A. Sewall at Bath, Maine, and launched in June 1883. Of 1,877 tons, net, the ship was 233 feet long with a beam of 46 feet. Captain Morrison lost three other vessels under his command; the ship *James A. Wright* in 1877, the ship *Oracle* in January 1883 (earlier in the year before the shipwreck of the *Ranier*), and the ship *Parker M. Whitmore* in August 1890.

Building your own rescue boat, while it may not be common, was certainly carried out successfully over the centuries. See also the article in the MHA Journal Volume 9, No. 4 for the story of another shipwrecked crew building their own rescue vessel.

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Peter Worsley



Messing About Incompetently

The first episode of Nick Burninham's times under sail

Perhaps I am far enough removed from the young Nick Burningham who obsessively went sailing traditional ships and boats in Indonesian and northern Australia to write about that part of my life, not too much deflected by the urge to excuse or justify myself or by diffidence. However, the reader should not expect much searing honesty or revelation. I have worked with Tim Severin on a couple of his projects and noted his technique. His voyages are recounted in the Homeric epic mode. All petty obstructions and squalor are ignored to provide an inspiring armchair adventure. I am rather more infected by the self-conscious irony of our times but, in the end, sailing engineless, traditional sailing craft is a serious business; a business that I learned the hard way and I cannot write about it in my whimsical style. In a review of Tim Severin's "The China Voyage" I wrote "But Tim continues being calm, polite and stoically cheerful. I mentioned that aspect of the narrative to one of his former shipmates who remarked 'Yes, he just goes on driving everyone else round the bend.'"

It was unfair of me to include that personal comment in a book review and the truth is that I grabbed at that remark because I suspect it describes me far better than it does Tim.

When I started writing these recollections it became obvious that I had forgotten things and couldn't fit all the events I thought I remembered into a consistent chronology; so, I decided, it was time to write it up before I forgot everything. What I have written should be regarded as anecdotal rather than a reliable historical record.

Not that the events and voyages recalled here happened such a very long time ago — I am not old, scarcely embarked on vigorous middle-age I assure you— yet I do seem to have been recording another age. It was a time when youthful recklessness hadn't been completely commodified as bungee jumping, whitewater rafting and X-treme sports; though irresponsible use of over-powered cars was probably reaching its zenith of popularity. It was a time when young people could live cheerfully (or hopelessly) in squalid simplicity, saving enough funds to buy a rotting Chinese junk to sail away on with no knowledge of navigation; or buy a beaten-up old double-decker bus intending to drive across the desert wastes of Iraq and Iran, heading for India, with no spare parts or knowledge of mechanics.

I was always fated to buy the junk rather than the bus. As a very young child, I was interested in railway

trains, or so I am told. We lived near a railway line and I could watch the Brighton Belle express go through each day before listening to "Listen with Mother" on the radio. Then we moved to a village more distant from railway lines where I lost interest in railways and became obsessed with ships, particularly sailing ships, although the village was not on the coast. All my school books had drawings of sailing ships in the margins. On wet weekends I painted pictures of sailing ships. At the age of eight or nine I won a prize for my painting of HM Transport Bounty in a dark storm off Cape Horn, a picture that I thought more convincing than the model tossed about in a bath-tub that I had recently seen in the 1960s *Mutiny on the Bounty* film.

One Christmas my dear Aunt Toni brought a board game called Careers. As I recall it, one threw dice and proceeded around a board to pick up professions, qualifications and salaries, or languished beachcombing and on the Park Bench. It was a simple game of chance, depending almost entirely on the fall of the dice. While my sisters and Aunt Toni accumulated professions and wealth, I never effectively escaped a shuffle between beachcombing and the park bench. I'm not much inclined to read any real significance, any genuine cause and effect into the course I ran in that board game — I'm not superstitious person on land, only superstitious at sea under sail — but, by coincidence or random chance it was a remarkable piece of sortilege.

About a decade later, in 1974, I was living the life of a beach bum in north Queensland. Several of us lived in a couple of rented shacks on a beach outside Mackay. As an outlet for any ambition or competitive spirit we built and raced balsa-wood model sailing boats on the creek. Alan Jolly was my main competitor in the 30cm class. And it was Alan who learned from a magazine that there were a very large number of commercial sailing vessels still registered and operating in Indonesia. At the time we assumed they were Chinese junk-type vessels.

Towards the end of 1974, as the humid and stormy wet season approached, and life in northern Queensland lost some of its charm, Alan proposed that we get jobs in an outback mining camp and save enough money to go and buy a junk in which we would cruise Southeast Asia. Or perhaps we intend to buy a junk and sail back to the beautiful north Queensland waters as soon as possible.

Peko Mines Inc. were good enough to provide the



jobs, at the original Peko mine, near Tennant Creek in Australia's Northern Territory. It was a rugged place to work. For accommodation we each had our own little donggah — a hut, like a kennel in size and shape. Those kennels stood in straight rows on a flat, treeless patch of the red stony semi-desert around the mine. They were appallingly hot to sleep in during the day when working night shift. I was not a model employee in my first station as a labourer, nor later as an assayer. My subjective approach to assaying the concentrated ore that we were supposed to concentrate by a process called flotation gave impressive results for the shift I worked on, but the inaccuracy of intuiting assay results while dozing probably contributed significantly to the Peko spoil tip being so rich in metals that it was bought and reprocessed some years later.

While working at Peko, we met a young man, also named Alan, who had come from Indonesia via Darwin. He had reached Darwin sailing as passenger/crew on an Indonesian perahu owned by a German. From Alan we learned that Indonesian vessels were not like junks. What he had sailed on, I now know to have been a sloop-rigged perahu lambo. But Alan had a drug problem and little understanding of sailing, so it was difficult to get much clear information from him. We also met Shane Condon who was working at neighbouring Yorky's Knob Mine and he elected to join our adventure.

It must have been June or July 1975 when Alan and I flew to Bali. We had something more than \$2000 each. Alan had been to SE Asia before, I hadn't. Arriving in Bali, we took a taxi to Kuta Beach and there got hustled into a losmen (guest house) at about twice the going rate. I don't recall much of the first few days in Bali. I was trying to learn some basic Indonesian and cope with culture shock. After a day or two we negotiated a bemo into Denpasar and another one to Benoa harbour. (Or did we rent bicycles and ride over to Benoa?) I remember approaching Benoa on the causeway and seeing one of the harbour ferries with its lateen rig. Optimistically I observed that it seemed to have quite good hull form and didn't say anything about the difficulties of handling a lateen rig. At Benoa there was a sloop-rigged lambo unloading live turtles. She appeared very beamy and ungainly to me then. On the basis of her livery (white and turquoise with yellow trims) I suppose she was one of the turtle perahu from the island of Sabalana, most of which were attractive vessels with good lines.

We must have negotiated to go across the harbour to the village of Tanjung Benoa on one of the janggolan working as harbour ferries and, no doubt, we paid at least twenty times the standard fare. Tourists, particularly French, used to visit Tanjung Benoa with the



A Sabalana perahu lambo leaving Benoa

mistaken idea, perpetrated by a French guide book available then, that it was an island where turtles were bred in captivity. The ferry-men usually took the tourists across to Tanjung Benoa for a not-too-exorbitant fare. They would look around the village, see the captive turtles in the pens built below the high tide line, and disport on the fine white sandy beach on the seaward side of the village. Meanwhile the ferry-men would unrig and pack up their ferries, storing the sails and spars in thatched shelters built for the purpose and taking home the rudders, oars and other gear. Towards the end of the day, when the tourists decided it was time to return to the mainland (as they thought it to be) they would find all the ferries moored idly out in the stream, and no one around to ask about a passage back to Ujung Benoa. Anyone they asked would look blank or shrug their shoulders. Eventually someone would go and find a ferryman who would wander down to the harbour bleary-eyed and obviously woken from a snooze, and he would grunt some astronomical number of rupiah as a price, which the tourists would reject with horror. But there was to be no bargaining. The ferryman just wandered away again. The point of this strategy was to get all the tourists worked up into such a frenzy of rage and despair that they could be separated into small groups and each constrained to charter a separate ferry for a truly exorbitant sum.

The French Guide Book was prophetic. By the year 2000, live turtles were no longer brought to Bali to be eaten on festive occasions, but tourists really do go to a "Turtle Island" (Serangan Island, north of Benoa and connected to the mainland by a causeway) to see sacred turtles kept in a temple.

I don't recollect my first impressions of Tanjung Benoa, a place where I was to spend some months. It was then a pretty village built on a point of gleaming white sand on the southern side of the entrance to Benoa harbour. On the inland side of the point, you had to walk carefully on that sand around the high tide line because it was fairly thick with human excrement. At low tide there were extensive sand flats exposed with lots of pools of warm water. It was very pleasant to take a crap a couple of hundred metres out



from the village, surveying the wide harbour, and supplied with abundant warm water to douche one's self, but much of the village populace seemed to be conditioned to crap at high tide when the walk to the water was much shorter.

It must have been on that first visit to Benoa that we met with Peter Walker who was there on the perahu PERINTIS that had been built in South Sulawesi for him and his brother John. She was an auxiliary motor-perahu in design, rigged with only a short mast, but there was no engine. Peter and John had employed an Indonesian crew to sail PERINTIS down from Sulawesi to Gilimanuk, Bali with a following wind. Then Peter, John and their mates had tried to sail east against the southeast trade winds the thousand miles to Darwin, Australia. With her short rig and little ballast PERINTIS was nearly unable to go to windward. They had tacked for days and days along the north coast of Bali, then crossed Lombok Strait reaching on the stiff southerly that blows up the strait most afternoons. They had tacked onwards, day after day, along the north coast of Lombok making pitifully slow progress. PERINTIS went best with plenty of breeze they believed, but by almost any standards she hardly went to windward at all, and their voyage was a remarkable example of enduring tenacity (which none of them would ever want to repeat).

By the time they had reached the Alas Strait on the eastern side of Lombok they had taken the best part of a month to make about 150 nautical miles eastwards and were determined to try something else. Going down the Alas Strait to the Indian Ocean seemed like the way to get more wind. So they headed off down the strait. All the straits between the islands of the Sunda Archipelago (Sumatera to Timor) have powerful south-setting currents during the dry season or east monsoon (May to November), so PERINTIS had no trouble getting south. At the southern end of the strait they were becalmed and the current swirled them around the cliffs and limestone stacks there, at one stage within a few hair-raising metres of some pinnacles of rock. Then they were spewed out into the Indian Ocean where the west-going current along the southern side of the islands made progress impossible. Both in calms and strong winds they were driven inexorably back towards Bali, but the south-going current of Lombok Strait made it impossible to get into Benoa on Bali. They were carried past Uluwatu (Bali's southern tip) and were lucky to negotiate a tow into Benoa from one of the, then rare, motor perahu.

Peter was living on board PERINTIS in Benoa, making arrangements to lay her up while he went back to Australia to get more funds so that he could give her a proper rig and then sail to Australia when the wet sea-

son northwest monsoon would make it an easier voyage. He invited us on board. PERINTIS was beached, lying over on her bilge. Below she was unbelievable bare for a vessel that was someone's home, but Peter's life-style was always austere. When I sailed with him some years later his worldly possessions, aside from the boat, seemed to be a toothbrush, a comb and a towel the size of a table napkin. I suspect we smoked some marijuana with him that day. Suitably doped up we questioned him about buying a perahu. Where to go? How much to pay? He was generous with his knowledge and wished us the best of luck with our project. He also introduced us to Wayan Kerig, the local fisherman and small-scale entrepreneur who was going to look after PERINTIS while Peter was in Australia. Kerig was a plump, cheerful man with a scruffy house-compound beside the harbour. His wife was reserved but always pleasant and there were always several snotty-nosed kids scrabbling around. Kerig spoke almost no English beyond his standard hospitable invitation "You come di house me, dring coffee". And we spoke no useful Indonesian, so he sent for his cousin Ketut Kawi who was studying English. Ketut was about my age (Alan and Kerig were both about ten years older). He expressed himself very willing to help in our search to buy a perahu. However, we didn't intend to rush into buying anything.

Living at Kuta Beach and gradually learning some Indonesian was fun. We went body surfing when the tide was right and hung out in the hippy and tourist restaurants that were opening up in those years. Lasirawati's in Poppies Lane was a favourite. There was the Bamboo Den opposite Made's Warung (which still exists in a fantastically glossy-magazine version of the original) and for a splurge there was Poppies which is also still going strong. The Bamboo Den has subsequently been a photo processing shop, a travel agency, a Japanese restaurant, a disco, and who knows what's there now. Kuta's first two-storey building was built on the site about 1980 and we all gasped in horror.

A basic question facing us, when we could be bothered to think about it, was should we look to buy a perahu at Benoa or go to some remoter part of Indonesia. We decided to go and look at remoter parts of Indonesia but didn't get very far. We took the ferry across the strait to Lombok and stayed there for a few days. At Labuan Lembar we went on board a large perahu pinis (more than 200 tonnes I would guess) that was loading little red onions or shallots, garlic, and chillies, all packed in giant cane baskets that labourers staggered aboard with. The number of little onions was astonishing, there must have been literally millions. They were being trucked in from all over



Lombok. By then my Indonesian must have been just adequate because I was able to learn a little about the pinis and the cargo by talking with her friendly crew.

Perahu crew were the most easy people to talk with; always open and welcoming, accommodating towards inadequate Indonesian and ready for a chat. As maritime people they were used to contact with other ethnicities. Land people could be more insular. I remember that we wrangled unpleasantly about bemo fares and losmen tariffs in Lombok. The fault was largely with us. I was too tense about bargaining and turned it into a squabble, a tactic that is certain to put you in a losing position.

At the losmen or hotel in Mataram, Lombok, an old Moslem man came one day and offered to give a massage. He was thin and wiry and very charming. He took my hand and massaged it. It was as if he was able to insert his sharp fingers right inside the bones and ligaments of my hand and wrist. After a minute of his work my hand was all floppy and relaxed. I stupidly turned down the offer of a full massage: at the time I said I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to get up again after his massage, which was half true. Years later I met someone whose experience confirmed that fear.

We ate at a Chinese restaurant one night. We had frogs legs in a sort of ginger stew and also battered frogs legs fried with a sweet chilli and tomato sauce; both were very good and were, for me, the beginning of a strong interest in Asian food. There wasn't much genuine traditional cuisine available to tourists in Kuta, and at Benoa the rice and fish was good but very simple.



It was in Lombok that Alan and I tacitly agreed that the convenience of buying a perahu at Benoa would outweigh the disadvantages of greater cost and limited choice of perahu there. All the perahu that came into Benoa brought live turtles. They came from small islands in the Java Sea, Makassar Strait and Flores Sea, as well as the mainland of Sulawesi. Many of them were owned by Bajo "sea gypsy" people. The majority were perahu lambo — sloops or occasionally ketches with counter stern or in a few cases double-ended. Most of them sailed quite adequately by traditional sailing craft standards, but being heavily built they carried huge rigs, much more difficult to handle than a modern yacht's rig. There were also perahu bago with similar rig to the lambo but a different hull shape, ancient and capacious, steered with double rudders mounted on the quarters (wrongly called "steering oars"). In some cases the bago were very slow and clumsy sailers.

So we returned to Bali and found that another Australian-owned perahu had come to Benoa: a fairly large and very exotic looking gaff-rigged bago called ISTANA. She was owned by another Peter — Peter Warren. He had bought her second-hand in South Sulawesi on the Mandar coast, north of Ujung Pandang. ISTANA was a magnificent vessel though distinctly impractical as a yacht. She was very well constructed, largely of teak, and she had been well maintained and smartly painted. Peter had initially tried to sail with insufficient ballast and an inexperienced Australian crew. They had never really got control of the vessel and had given up the attempt after a few scares and near misses with reefs. ISTANA was almost flat bottomed, steered by two quarter rudders, and carried a huge gaff-sloop rig with a very long gaff. She made lots of leeway and could only be persuaded to tack by an experienced crew. So Peter got a Mandar crew to sail down to Gilimanuk Bali, and then got a Balinese crew from Benoa to sail her around the coast to Benoa. They had a fine passage from Gilimanuk to Benoa with plenty of wind from ahead, but the Balinese knew how to use the currents and counter currents; they tacked round Uluwatu going about every ten minutes, carefully watching the current. Peter was elated from the experience when we first met him.

He had an attractive wife and two young kids, comfortably set up in a bungalow off Poppies Lane in Kuta. Peter became something of the guru of perahu buying and sailing, sitting in his lamp-lit bungalow dispensing advice. His plans for ISTANA were to leave her with Wayan Kerig, to have work done on her and, when he returned from Australia, have a small engine installed. He would sail her to Australia in the wet season when inds were favourable.



Perahu Bago

ISTANA was beached, her tabernacle-stepped mast lowered and taken ashore, and all the layers of well maintained white paint scraped off her hull. Peter admitted to having misgivings about doing it, but, he said, for her to be accepted as the princess she was, in Australia, she would need a glistening smooth paint-job. (Unfortunately, it was more than a decade before he returned and ISTANA had fallen to bits on the beach by then.)

Meanwhile, Alan and I were back to looking at any perahu that might be for sale at Tanjung Bena. Ketut Kawi accompanied us looking at prospective yachts. A few he warned us against. One was a Javanese mayang converted to a lambo sloop. She had intriguing lines but her long sharp stern and flat bottom were not the makings of a seaworthy vessel. I was developing a preference for the lambo that came from an island called Bonerate, though at that stage I didn't know that was where they were from. One pretty little Bonerate-built lambo named ANTARTIKA (Indonesian for Antarctica) looked manageable and affordable. We expressed tentative interest and asked would be possible to go for a trial sail on her. Her captain-owner Abdul Muin wasn't very keen, he wanted to know how much we would pay for her if she sailed adequately. We weren't prepared to say and still didn't really have much idea what we ought to pay. Both the Peters advised incredibly small sums of money, but they had paid rather greater amounts themselves. We went away for a bit of body-surfing and perhaps a magic mushroom omelette, then came back a couple of days later to look at ANTARTIKA again and any other lambo that were for sale. There was a brand new, unpainted, Bonerate lambo with nice lines, rather larger than ANTARTIKA. Suggest-

ing to her owners that they should sell her us at a reasonable price seemed a terrible impertinence. We never did make the suggestion. We mooched around until Wayan Kerig negotiated that we come back in couple of days time to go for a sail on ANTARTIKA.

We arrived in Bena on the appointed morning, probably frazzled by acrimonious negotiations with the harbour ferrymen. It was a cool blustery morning with clouds and a few rain squalls. We got to Kerig's house where Ketut explained that Abdul Muin wanted to talk money first. We refused. "I'm sorry. He think you just like to go sailing." said Ketut.

Much against Alan's better judgement I agreed to some money discussion. How much would we like to offer? We really didn't know. In the end it came to a situation where we could go for a trial sail on the basis that we would pay 600 000 Rupiah (a bit more than \$1000) for ANTARTIKA if she sailed adequately.

By the time those negotiations were over, the spring tide was pouring out of Bena harbour. There was, in those days, a narrow dog-leg passage through the reef. Getting out of Bena during the dry season usually involved tacking dead to windward through the channel, but with a good three knots of current pushing us out of the harbour Abdul Muin didn't bother to show how well ANTARTIKA could sail to windward: he kept the sheets eased slightly and head-reached back and forwards while the ebb sucked us out to sea.

ANTARTIKA sailed at a good speed and came about reliably with some assistance from the sails despite the strong windward-going tide under her stern. A rusted topmast stay parted as she heeled to a gust but Abdul chuckled and said it didn't matter. I had already seen that we would need to replace most of the rigging if we bought her. Outside the harbour we reached a short way up the coast, turned round and ran back into the harbour surging over the tide. She sailed quite well as far as I could see though we'd had no way of judging her real windward ability. We were more or less committed to buying her.

I had inspected below decks but there were parts of the hull I couldn't get at because they were full of firewood, scorpions, ballast, millipedes, or water containers. We hadn't seen her out of the water either. However, Kerig and Ketut Kawi both said she was sound, so, by default it seemed, we had agreed to buy her.

We arranged to make payment and do the official business with the Harbourmaster's Office two days



later. When we came to finalise the deal, Abdul had got cold feet — he was scared of the Harbourmaster and bureaucrats in the Harbourmaster's Office (probably because they would extort a large unofficial payment from him). He said he would sign papers with the village headman (Kepala Desa) but not the Harbourmaster, we would have to arrange things with the Harbourmaster ourselves. So we paid Abdul and signed papers with the Kepala Desa, and then began to tackle the Harbourmaster's officials. It took two or three days of waiting outside and inside offices and we had to pay a percentage of the purchase price. One of the offices we waited in was stacked to the ceiling with crates and chests containing documents and mice. There were dozens of mice; you could see them scurrying to and from the boxes and hear far more of them shredding their way through the documents. The officials in the office seemed very pleased with their archive shredding arrangement.

Fortunately for us, Kerig had contacts in the Harbourmaster's office who eased us through what would have otherwise been a terrible exasperating experience. I doubt that we had the patience and maturity to have got through it unaided.

The Harbourmaster explained that as foreigners we could not own an Indonesian registered vessel, I would have to go to Jakarta and arrange British registry (there was no Australian register of shipping until after 1980). I agreed to do that. Meanwhile we made arrangements to beach ANTARTIKA to do some work on her. Like virtually all perahu, she was coated below the waterline with a layer of smooth lime cement. I can't recall why we decided that had to come off, but we did. I suppose we were simply following the example of the Peters in an uncritical way. We also decided to scrape off much of the old paint and repaint, following Peter Warren's example. Alan was not sure of the need to scrape all the paint off, and he was quite right. What we did need to replace much of the rigging and anchor gear. We also needed to lower the very boxy profile of the deckhouse and put the cabin sole (floor) down in the hold since she was going to be a yacht, not a cargo carrier. She had a few minor leaks which needed caulking. Ketut Kawi's fa-

ther, Pak Kendri, was a boat builder of some repute so he was hired to do the carpentry.

Travelling to Jakarta to do the registration business I went via Yogyakarta. That was the route the bus from Bali took. I remember, indeed I will never forget, being alarmed and amazed at the speed the big Mercedes bus tore through the night, never slowing down as it approached corners, yet accelerating out of every corner to an even more insane speed. I spent a day recovering in Yogja then caught the train to Jakarta. The train ride was great. The train went slowly, stopping frequently, and at each stop food vendors got on carrying wonderful snacks which I shared with a genteel elderly Javanese couple sitting opposite. There were curried duck eggs and little savoury pastries and crunchy cassava crisps. It was cold in the mountains and the hot sweet ginger tea was very welcome.

A German girl I met on the bus gave me the address of a friend who lived in Jakarta running a web-offset printing press with whom she was confident I could stay. I phoned Herman who gave me instructions on how to reach his bungalow in the suburbs.

The registration business with the British Consulate took a couple of days. I had time to go to Sunda Kelapa harbour where there were hundreds of engineless perahu pinis, their long bowsprits projecting high over the trucks and ox-carts on the wharf and their tall masts reaching higher into the smoggy sky. It's a type of scene which will probably never be seen again. There are still plenty of perahu at Sunda Kelapa, but they are all auxiliaries with stumpy bowsprits and token rigs — they retain auxiliary sailer status (Perahu Layar Motor) because it allows them cheaper registration and less restrictive operating licenses. I talked to



the crews and went aloft on some of the pinis.

Returning to Bali, I caught the night train to Surabaya. I had bought a couple of business shirts in Jakarta to wear while going round the offices and felt quite smart sitting up in the air-conditioned first class carriage (there was only first class or sleeper class availa-



Prahu pinis drying sails at anchor

ble on the express night train). In Surabaya I went to the perahu harbour and learned where we could buy anchors and other cheap perahu chandlery.

Back in Benoa the new cabin was taking shape and it was a very smart cabin for a perahu; good Balinese carpentry, neatly fitted sliding wooden covers on the windows. I joined in the work. We were slowly scraping paint off and then slapping on a rather thin new layer over red lead primer.

Our visas, extendable up to three months, were running out so we had to fly up to Singapore to get new ones. There we bought a sextant, compass, charts and a bilge-pump.

At about that time, Shane Condon joined us. He had been to see his family in New South Wales before flying to Bali. He had rather less money than we did and I was beginning to see that we were going to need a fair bit of the stuff. There was still plenty of work to be done. We intended to make a new suit of sails, replace nearly all of the rigging, build some simple furniture down below, improve the anchor gear, and replace the traditional cooking arrangements.

In those days, all perahu had a simple wooden box on legs with sand and rocks in the bottom to create a hearth. Rice and anything else that needed cooking was cooked over a wood fire in the hearth. Usually the firebox was lashed to the mast. Food on perahu was generally very simple: rice and little bit of salt-dried fish was the standard meal. Salt dried fish was very easy to cook at sea. The cooky, usually a boy in his early teens, held the dried fish over the flames till the tail caught fire, then he waved it about to stop it burning, and chopped it into small pieces. The rice was usually low quality, but on perahu from poor islands it was replaced by dried corn that was ground up to make a mealy porridge.

To economise, we moved from the losmen in Kuta to

Benoa. Alan and Shane lived fairly comfortably on board ANTARTIKA though there were no bunks built, but Ketut Kawi insisted that I, as the captain-apparent and most competent Indonesian speaker, live at his house. We all ate at his house, usually rice and fresh tuna with chilli sambal —delicious, but perhaps we were not getting enough fruit and vegetable.

As the end of the year and the wet season approached, the weather was hotter and more unpleasantly humid. The tropical environment and perhaps some dietary deficiency were getting to us. Cuts were always getting infected and we were short of energy. Alan was permanently stoned and was starting to hear voices. We didn't find out about his delusion until later but he was obviously more and more unhappy about something. Shane, Alan and I went to Surabaya, Java, to buy wire cable, rope, chain, sail-cloth and an extra anchor. In the street where one bought those things we got a lot of attention from the local Buginese Banci (hemaphrodites, transvestites or female impersonators who traditionally have status as seers). I thought I handled it well — I was enjoying myself because my Indonesian was getting better, the bargaining was going well, and I like being the centre of attention. Alan was horrified. He believed that people on Benoa thought we were homosexuals and, although he spoke little Indonesian and no Balinese at all, he believed he heard people talking about us on minibuses in Kuta and Denpasar. Now, it seemed to him, word of our shame had spread to Surabaya; but it was another couple of weeks before he explained all that.

At Benoa we had acquired our own outrigger sailing canoe which made us independent of the harbour ferries and therefore able to stay out late at night. Every week or two we went to Kuta for a day or two of rest and recreation. Peter Walker had returned from Australia and sometimes he joined us on nights out. There was also John Hamilton, a New Zealander, who had bought an attractive but elderly lambo that had brought turtles to Benoa from the Bajo "Sea Gypsy" village of Mola in the Tukang Besi islands. He paid a very low price for OMEGA I, but she was at the end of her useful life and John never did anything with her. He bought her from the son of her owner, a loud and flamboyant young man with an Ace of Clubs-shaped gold filling set in one of his front incisors. He died of a fever a year or two later, but his brother Haji Idriss was, and probably still is, one of the main entrepreneurs at Mola.

(The be continued)



QUIZ

Answers to September

1. A pledget is a string of oakum, rolled from the loose fibre and used to caulk the seams in a wooden vessel.
2. The captain of the *Zeewijk* in 1727 was Jan Steyns.
3. Arthur Head was named by Captain James Stirling in March 1827 after Sir George Arthur (1784-1854), the Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's land from 1823 to 1837. It was Arthur who set up the convict establishments at Port Arthur and Maria Island.

Questions

1. Whereabouts are the following (they are all in the same area): Cape Vlaming, North Point, White Hill, Tree Hill, Duffield Ridge and Roe Reef?
2. What is the housing of a mast?
3. What year was the *Orizaba* wrecked on Five Fathom Bank near Garden Island?



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